

SMOKY MOUNTAINS



WORKFORCE AREA

2014 PLAN MODIFICATIONS

*Submitted by the staff on behalf of the Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board
and the American Job Center/Tennessee Career Center Partners*

**Center for Workforce Development
Walters State Community College
Morristown, Tennessee**

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Key Terms

Administrative Entity	Organization designated by the local elected officials to administer the Workforce Investment Act funds. In the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area, the Consortium of Local Elected Officials chose Walters State Community College as the administrative entity for the 10 counties in Local Area 2.
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
CEO	Chief Elected Officials, who are the 10 county mayors that serve as the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials in 10 county mayors in the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area.
CRC	Career Readiness Certificates test the work readiness of jobseekers using WorkKeys.
CWD	The Center for Workforce Development at Walters State Community College staffs the Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board and provides WIA program services in area career centers and career service offices.
DolceVita	DolceVita is the state's performance reporting system for local areas and is operated by the University of Memphis.
eCMATS	Tennessee's enhanced Case Management and Activity Tracking System, a statewide database for WIA and other state programs.
DHS	Department of Human Services.
ECD	Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.
EMSI	Economic Modeling Systems International's (EMSI) economic modeling program used by the Center for Workforce Development.
ETRAMA	East Tennessee Regional Agribusiness Marketing Authority.
GIS	Geographic Information System.
HVAC	Heating, ventilation and air conditioning.
IWT	Incumbent Worker Training.
Jobs4TN.gov	Jobs4TN.gov is the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's website that includes job postings, Labor Market Information and other features for jobseekers and employers.
JTPA	Jobs Training Partnership Act and the program authorized by the act.
LEED	Designates buildings that meet nationally accepted standards for the design, construction and operation of energy-efficient, environmentally-friendly "green" buildings.
LMI	Labor Market Information.

LWIA 2	Local Workforce Investment Area 2 was renamed the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area by the local workforce board in 2008.
LWIB 2	The Local Workforce Investment Area 2 Workforce Board was renamed the Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board in 2008.
NAWB	National Association of Workforce Boards.
OJT	On-the-job training.
REA	Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment
RESA	Re-employment Services Assessment.
RR	Rapid Response.
SACS	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
SETA	Southeastern Employment and Training Association.
SMAWB	Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board.
Smoky Mountains Workforce Area	The 10 counties in East Tennessee which comprise the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area: Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Sevier and Union.
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TABE	Test of Adult Basic Education.
TBR	Tennessee Board of Regents.
TDLWD	Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.
TRA	Trade Readjustment Allowances.
Training Waiver	A waiver allowed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 that permits an entity to serve as both staff to the local workforce board and as a training provider, if requested by the workforce board and approved by the governor.
UI	Unemployment Insurance.
USDOL	U. S. Department of Labor.
Voc Rehab	Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Department of Human Services.
WIA	Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the programs authorized by the Act.
WOTC	Work Opportunity Tax Credit.
WSCC	Walters State Community College.

PREFACE: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

P.1 Organizational Description

The Smoky Mountains Workforce Area (LWIA2) includes 10 East Tennessee counties: Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Sevier and Union. The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board (SMAWB) oversees the provision of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services in these counties. Walters State Community College is the administrative entity for the 10 counties, and the college's Center for Workforce Development (CWD) serves as staff to the board. The primary partners in the American Job Centers/Tennessee Career Centers are the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD), Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) in the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) and WIA. WIA programs at the career centers include the adult and dislocated worker programs as well as the older youth program. The WIA youth program for in-school youth and younger youth is primarily delivered by six youth service providers in eight counties and by case managers in the Center for Workforce Development in two counties.

During the planning process, the partners identified ways to align and integrate the comprehensive and affiliate centers, with their different staffing levels. The implementation of the improvements that the partners identified will be tracked in the meetings of the partners and the regional TDLWD manager's staff meetings, which include WIA staff. The comprehensive American Job Center/Tennessee Career Center at Talbott will involve integration of the three major partners: WIA, TDLWD and

Voc Rehab. Service integration and functional alignment have always been a goal of the area partners.

Customers are currently served through the American Job Centers/Tennessee Career Centers in Sevierville and Talbott (comprehensive centers), and Greeneville and Tazewell (affiliate centers) and through youth service providers and Walters State youth case management staff. With its partners in the career centers, including the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the staff makes every effort to provide seamless services to jobseekers.

Together the partners respond to the needs of the unemployed, underemployed, dislocated workers, individuals with disabilities, non-English speakers, senior jobseekers, youth 18 and above in the career centers and employers. Working together, the partners have functionally aligned and integrated their services.

Functional Management Structure. In the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area, a team of partners works effectively together to provide integrated services in two comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers, as well as services to youth through service providers and the WIA staff for counties with a waiver of the requirement to bid specific elements. The American Jobs Center/Career Center Management Committee meets quarterly to make joint decisions on how to operate the centers. The management committee includes representatives of the TDLWD from the comprehensive centers in Sevierville and Talbott, a regional TDLWD supervisor, a Voc Rehab supervisor, and WIA staff, including the dean responsible for CWD and the

director and assistant director of WIA services in the career centers. The service integration and functional management aspects of the career centers were developed by the management team in 2013-2014. The team will implement as outlined in the 2014 local area plan, the Memorandum of Understanding, agreements developed with partners and the board under Workforce Services policies 7.0 and 8.0.

Organizational Chart. An organizational chart is included as Figure 1. The chart illustrates the supervisory responsibilities in the American Jobs Centers/Tennessee Career Centers. Each partner is responsible for assuring that their organization functions effectively, is functionally aligned and integrates services with the other partners.

American Job Centers/Tennessee Career Centers in the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area include:

- Talbott (comprehensive center with three partners – TDLWD, Voc Rehab and WIA)
- Sevierville (comprehensive center with TDLWD and WIA)
- Greeneville (affiliate center with WIA staff and electronic access to TDLWD and other partner services through Jobs4TN.gov and referrals)
- Tazewell (affiliate center with WIA staff and electronic access to TDLWD and other partner services through Jobs4TN.gov and referrals)

Customer flow in the career centers is discussed in more detail and illustrated in Figure 2 in Section VI. A. on page 22.

Service Integration. The local area delivers services through a wide variety of methods, including the career centers, area youth

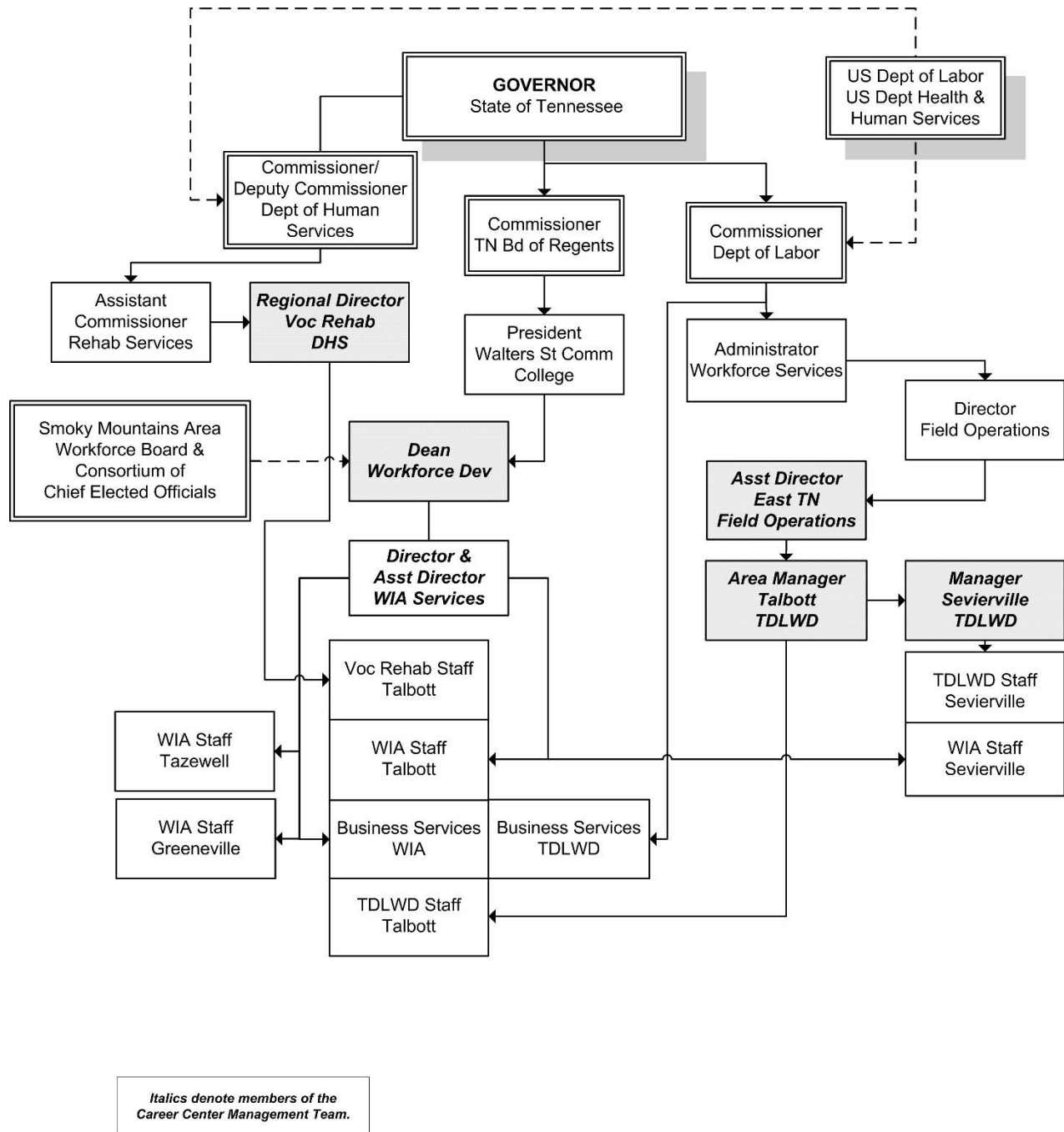
service providers and WIA youth staff (under a waiver for specific required elements), Jobs4TN.gov and the smokymtnjobs.org websites, brochures, newspaper ads, job and hiring fairs, incumbent worker training (IWT), on the job training (OJT), classroom training, job search, workshops, and employer training.

Quality Improvements. The partner consortium includes WIA, TDLWD, and Voc Rehab. All of these partners are present in the comprehensive Career Center at Talbott. The partners work effectively together in a management team with an elected chair and vice-chair to operate the comprehensive and affiliate centers. One example is a recent decision to move the comprehensive center at Talbott. The current leased facility has had a number of serious problems, including constant leaks in the roof, which prompted the decision. However, the need to move to another facility may give the committee additional options to increase service integration and functional alignment through reconfiguring the space.

Other improvements are anticipated in the delivery and management of services with the enhancements to Jobs4TN.gov. The improved website will provide more services for jobseekers and employers, easier access to needed information for partner staff, and better reporting to stakeholders, such as the workforce board and county mayors.

The local area will continue to use customer surveys, including the University of Memphis survey results, to measure improvement. Many of the comments in the surveys are very revealing and provide useful information to both determine needed improvements and to measure the results.

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Figure 1. Smoky Mountains Workforce Area Organizational Chart

Areas for Improvement. The management committee identified several areas for continuous improvement in the upcoming year: upgrading the smokymtnjobs.org website and keeping it current, updating the online orientation, providing staff training and cross-training, including additional training in the improved Jobs4TN.gov that allows more sharing, potentially reconfiguring the welcome area to improve the experience for customers in a newly leased space; and improving coordination with other workforce and economic development agencies such as the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD).

Staff training in case management was provided to all TDLWD and WIA staff from five local areas in East Tennessee in February and March, 2014. The training was developed by a regional team that includes the five East Tennessee local areas. The management committee will be developing a plan for cross-training staff. Career center staff may also be able to attend Global Career Development Facilitator training, if offered. More informal training will occur with joint staff meetings.

Functional Areas. There are three functional areas in the career centers.

1) *Welcome Function.* The welcome function will vary somewhat between the comprehensive and affiliate centers, based on the staffing of each center. A two-person team will work together at the comprehensive center at Talbott to direct visitors, performing a type of triage.

First-time visitors will be greeted by one of the team and asked to complete a short survey, asking about their needs. In the comprehensive career center in Sevierville,

which only has one WIA staff person, the welcome person will alternate between TDLWD and WIA, with TDLWD staff usually working as the greeter. In the affiliate centers, the WIA staff will perform all functions, as there is only one staff person. Activities will include not only greeting the individual as soon as possible, but offering an orientation in addition to directing them to services. Greeters can also offer calendars for workshops and other resources in the resource room at any of the centers.

The local area and region as a whole have always operated on two philosophies: there is “no wrong door” to entering the career centers to receive services and it is “all hands on deck” whenever there is a job to be done and one agency’s staff needs assistance from other staff. Hiring events, for example, are joint efforts with all staff assisting as needed. A recent example is the hiring event for Fit Footwear Industries. When where are major events, including “Paychecks for Patriots” or local workforce board meetings at the career centers, it is a joint effort.

All of the agency staff will have access to the new parts of the Jobs4TN.gov website where jobseekers and employers can be registered. Registration may be done as a part of the welcome function by any staff.

2) *Skills/Career Development Function.* A customer that visits the career center can receive any available resources for skills and career development from the partner agencies, depending on the needs of the customer. Many begin by visiting the resource rooms in the comprehensive centers or exploring Jobs4TN.gov in the comprehensive or affiliate centers. Customers also have access to Labor Market Information at Jobs4TN.gov.

Once the customer identifies his or her needs, the individual will be directed by the welcome team to the appropriate services, which may involve more than one partner. If the individual has identified a job opening and is not interested in other services, they might meet with a TDLWD staff person to receive a referral. Other individuals may be directed to the Vocational Rehabilitation staff if they indicate that they have a disability or to WIA if they need job training. As the customer receives services, the individual may be referred to other staff for additional assistance, such as using KeyTrain to prepare for a Career Readiness Certificate or to determine if they need training. An individual also may be referred to other resources, such as Adult Education, that are not located in the career centers.

One group of customers that often is served by more than one agency is TAA participants. If they want and need training, the TDLWD staff refer them to WIA. WIA provides an assessment and advises the TDLWD staff if training is appropriate. The TDLWD staff prepares a contract, and the WIA staff assist with case management and follow-up and also provide support services, if the individual is eligible. This example of seamless services will continue in the career centers.

Other seamless services include workshops that are open to any individual that is eligible for career center services. Workshops address soft skills as well as basic employability skills, such as working with a computer. The calendar that the welcome team uses includes these workshops.

3) *Business Services Function.* The joint Business Services team includes two TDLWD staff who cover two Job Base Camp areas and two WIA staff that work in the local area. The team works to serve as many employers

as possible by providing hiring events, screening, assessments, Career Readiness Certificate testing if the employer prefers the CRC, joint events for individuals with disabilities, veterans, older workers and other groups. All of the team members cooperate in offering services to employers. To provide service integration, the team has all of the employers that use career center services list jobs on Jobs4TN.gov.

Hiring events for employers involve a joint effort with the staffs working together to take applications, enroll and screen applicants, administer assessments and even facilitate interviews on-site at the career centers. Rapid Response is also a joint effort with WIA and TDLWD staff meeting with employers and workers that will be (or already are) laid off or have lost their jobs due to a closure. WIA has a Rapid Response staff person that coordinates the program with the other partners.

On-the-job training and Incumbent Worker Training are utilized as incentives for employers to provide employee training. Requests for these services come to the WIA staff, which also markets the employer training, manages the contracts, and funds the training.

The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board, which has a private sector majority, also includes two representatives from TDLWD, one from Adult Education, and two from the administrative entity for WIA. The workforce board members are able to hear directly from employers and from local elected officials about their workforce needs.

Tools and Technology are available for individuals with disabilities in all career centers, as well as other customers. Individuals have access to computers, fax

machines, copy machines, and email. Employers have access to meeting and interview space, screening and assessments. Youth providers also provide tools and technology for assessment and career exploration.

Skills Assessment Tools for career center customers and participants include validated, standardized tests such as CareerScope, CAPS/COPEs/COPS, Kuder, Key Train, TABE, Compass tests administered by training providers, WorkKeys testing for Career Readiness Certificates, and RESA assessments for those individuals that are part of the RESA program. The youth service providers utilize validated assessment instruments, including the TABE and CareerScope, for youth. Staff are also taught to assess customers using interview techniques.

Measures of Success include negotiated WIA performance goals for the local area, performance goals for WIA, customer surveys by the University of Memphis for TDLWD and career center surveys, and other measures such as cost per participant. Performance results are included in Section VII. Annual reports also provide a summary of each year's accomplishments.

American Job Center Network Branding is already being utilized in emails, publications, news releases, the website, and in answering the telephone. The staff has already been implementing the branding in the career centers. As materials such as printed brochures are depleted, the new materials will be branded with the American Job Center logo.

One of the ways that the American Job Center brand will be promoted is by representing one entity in the future in organizations such as the chamber where

the different agencies have been paying separately for memberships. The brand will also be used in the telephone book, and in speaking with customers, including employers.

Level II Application Categories

I. Leadership

The vision of the Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board is “To support the economic development and quality of life in the 10-county region of Local Workforce Investment Area 2 by integrating the delivery of services to job seekers and employers.” The mission of the board is “To prepare youth and adults for employment by providing a seamless system of services that maximizes customer satisfaction, demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, strengthens the area’s economic base, and meets or exceeds all performance standards.” The partners have a joint goal of providing functionally aligned, integrated services in the career centers and, with the youth service providers, serving the youth that are most in need.

A. Senior Leadership.

The board and consortium work very effectively together to provide leadership in the local area. The consortium meets by itself preceding the local quarterly board meeting. The county mayors then join the workforce board for its meeting. Communication is maintained with the board, consortium, staff, partners, and local economic development leaders through regular emails and updates that show progress in achieving the vision and reflect the local area’s values.

The board and consortium endorse Governor Bill Haslam’s vision, goals and objectives for workforce development in Tennessee:

Our goal is simple: Top-tier education for our children. Retraining for those out of work and underemployed. A healthy

lifestyle. All three will make Tennessee No. 1 in the Southeast for high quality jobs.

- I. Make Tennessee the #1 State in the Southeast for Jobs
- II. Create a more seamless path from high school, post-secondary education or training, to the workforce
- III. Eliminate duplication and leverage dollars to provide more opportunities to existing job seekers and the emerging workforce.

Additional values and goals established by the board are to:

- Maximize employment and re-employment opportunities in LWIA 2 by promoting a partnership of business, industries and service agencies (Goal II);
- Empower individuals to succeed in the dynamic and changing LWIA 2 workforce (Goal I);
- Ensure that all customers are satisfied with workforce development services in LWIA 2;
- Increase the number of individuals achieving self-sufficiency by assisting them to locate, obtain and retain stable employment;
- Provide employers, educators and job seekers with relevant and timely information on the local labor market, services that support business growth, and a system that connects job seekers and employers with job opportunities (Goal II);
- Maximize the use of available resources, use resources in a cost-effective and efficient manner, and maximize the return on investment in the workforce development system in LWIA 2 (Goal III);

- Support the development of successful local employers that maximize the potential and skills of the LWIA 2 workforce (I); and
- Provide universal access, customer choice, and integration through an outcomes-oriented system that is based on the needs of job seekers and employers, ensures equal access to information, services and lifelong learning and continuously improves services to customers (II).

The workforce board works very closely with the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials. In February 2014, the board and consortium signed a joint agreement that clarified their operational relationship. The agreement underlined the practices of the two groups of leaders that have been in place since 2000. At that time, the county mayors chose Walters State Community College as the administrative entity for WIA in their 10 counties.

The board plays a leadership role in providing economic and demographic data for the region and for the counties. The 10 counties are in two different economic development regions, so data is not readily available for the region. Specialized reports and presentations are prepared by CWD staff on request for chambers of commerce, community groups, and economic organizations such as the East Tennessee Regional Agribusiness Marketing Authority (ETRAMA). As part of its economic development mission, CWD helps coordinate ETRAMA meetings. CWD maintains membership in all local chambers, and staff participates in chamber meetings as well as other economic and workforce development groups in the local area.

The board's goal is to serve as a resource and advocate for workforce development in the 10 counties. With recent efforts in marketing and public relations, the board is becoming better known and, as a result, has more opportunity to influence and support workforce development in the local area.

Disseminating the Vision and Values. The board, consortium, college and partners support the values and vision with funding for target occupations; involvement in business, economic development and community activities; information on the smokymtnjobs.org website, which is the partner's career center website; and reports and publications for the staff, board and public. While funding is limited, there may still be opportunities to provide promotional materials such as calendars to employers and participants that include the values and vision. Key partners, especially those that serve on the workforce board, are involved in developing the vision and values and understand the goals and objectives.

B. Governance and Social Responsibility

Management Accountability. Management accountability is achieved through frequent reporting to the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials, which is comprised of the 10 county mayors, and the workforce board, and to the president of Walters State. The Consortium appoints the members of the board and determines the administrative entity in cooperation with the local board. The local workforce board has two private sector members from each county and 10 additional private sector members that may come from any county to ensure diversity. The board's by-laws, which are based on Policy 6.0, Local Governance, govern the membership of the board.

The board, staff, career center partners, youth providers, and county mayors have developed strong working relationships. The board and county mayors have a joint meeting each quarter that is staffed by the coordinators, dean, director and assistant director. The career center staff and partners have meetings and celebrations whenever possible. An American Job Center/Tennessee Career Center Management Committee, which also includes a regional staff member from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, meets quarterly to discuss problems and develop continuously improving approaches to providing services.

CWD staff that carry out the day-to-day administrative and program operations of the program are accountable to the college. The senior staff person reports directly to the president of the college and serves on his Executive Council. The president reports to the Tennessee Board of Regents chancellor. The Director of WIA Services oversees the operation of the career centers, and the Assistant Director for Youth Services oversees the operation of the youth program by youth service contractors and CWD youth staff. Requests for Proposals are issued biennially by the board for youth services.

The staff that serves the board and consortium and provides WIA staff for the career centers is located in the Center for Workforce Development on Walters State's Morristown campus and in the area career centers. The staff currently has 25 staff members, including a management team that includes the Dean of Workforce Development, Director of WIA Services, Assistant Director of WIA Services, Director of WIA Fiscal, Assistant Director for Youth

Services, Coordinator of WIA Administration, Coordinator of WIA Compliance, and Coordinator of WIA Employer Services. Education levels of the management team members range from bachelor's degrees to a Ph.D. WIA Career Specialists and youth case managers are required to have bachelor's degrees or higher. WIA Career Center Assistants, youth clerks, fiscal clerk and a Secretary 2 are required to have high school diplomas or higher. Technology services are provided by a very experienced CWD staff person with an associate degree. He is supported by a college IT staff, which has bachelor's degrees or higher.

The performance of the individual staff members in the Center for Workforce Development is evaluated each year. The Dean of Workforce Development is evaluated by the President and by reverse evaluations from the staff that report directly to her. Staff managers in CWD evaluate the staff that report to them and are reverse evaluated. Reverse evaluations are forwarded to the staff person's supervisor. When the evaluations and meetings with staff to review performance are completed, the supervisors forward the evaluations to their supervisor and then the dean, who forwards them to the President.

The staff is team-oriented and values diversity. Monthly career center staff meetings include the management team. Monthly youth technical assistance meetings provide continuing support for the youth service providers.

Fiscal Accountability. The Director of WIA Fiscal and her staff do not report to the Dean of Workforce Development. The director reports to the Vice President for Business Affairs, who reports directly to the President. This allows for greater

accountability within the administrative entity. The director interacts daily with the dean and provides reports on a monthly basis, or more often, to her. Quarterly reports are prepared for the board and consortium, and the dean and director have a joint budget hearing with the president's key staff each year. WIA Fiscal is monitored by the fiscal monitor on the Program Accountability Review (PAR) team each year. The Tennessee Board of Regents prepares an audit of the college, including CWD, every other year. In addition, audits and monitoring are performed by the state comptroller's office, US Department of Labor and other entities, as required by law.

WIA Fiscal monitors the youth service providers, as well as employers that receive IWT funds. OJT contracts are monitored by the responsible WIA Career Specialist or the WIA Coordinator of Employer Services. The youth service providers are monitored yearly and the OJT and IWT contracts are monitored at the conclusion of the training. OJT and IWT invoices are not reimbursed until the monitoring is concluded.

Transparency. Communication is a key to transparency. The workforce board and staff comply with the Sunshine laws, issuing public notices for meetings, plans, and other activities for which notice is required. The results of internal and external audits are shared with the board's Executive Committee.

Conflict of interest statements are required of, and maintained for, all board members and staff. The conflict of interest provisions and board by-laws promote ethical behavior in the conduct of board and staff activities. One example is the recusing of board members with interests in organizations that are being considered for contracts. Board members who recuse themselves do

not vote on contracts that may affect them. The minutes of each meeting of the board and Youth Council record when this occurs.

The staff receives training and is monitored to ensure ethical behavior and compliance with the college's policies and procedures, as well as the state and national laws and regulations, and local board policies.

The Communication and Marketing staff at Walters State works with the media to ensure coverage of partner activities, and compliance with the Sunshine laws. Each quarter, at a minimum, the board and consortium receive a board briefing book which reports the past actions of the board in minutes, performance results compared with goals, workload, finances, on-the-job training, and dislocations. In addition, email is used regularly to communicate, and the draft agenda and minutes are also sent by surface mail three weeks prior to the board meetings. A draft board briefing book is emailed to the board members, partners, county mayors, WIA Career Specialists, and regional Workforce Services managers in advance of the board meeting. Results of monitoring are also shared.

Succession Planning. Every effort is made to hire and retain qualified staff that have multiple skills. Informal succession planning is ongoing, with cross-training of staff provided when possible. For example, TDLWD staff recently attended a CWD staff meeting to explain how to answer questions from those needing assistance with UI. Informal succession planning is ongoing, with cross-training of staff provided whenever possible. Staff often attend meetings, including meetings at the staff level, with the dean and other lead staff, to prepare for a smooth transition in an unanticipated situation. Job openings are posted on the Tennessee Board of Regents

website. In some cases, these job openings are initially limited to internal candidates with experience in the program.

II. Strategic Planning

A. Strategy Development

Key Participants. The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board, Consortium of Chief Elected Officials, and the Career Center Management Committee and the partner staff are key participants in strategic planning. The committee together examines and revises the SWOT analysis and other Phase I materials each year. Strategic planning occurs in a number of ways, especially the annual preparation of the local plan or plan modifications, which involves the key participants.

The Executive Committee of the local workforce board also provides continuing direction to the staff in focusing their efforts. The staff develops the plan or plan modifications according to guidance issued by the state, and reviews the draft with the career center partners and the board, as well as advertises it to the public. The staff tries to constantly monitor development in the workforce field, changes in national direction that may affect the workforce, and employer needs.

The yearly plan includes developing or updating a SWOT analysis with all of the career center partners. The staff receives daily updates from online publications, such as the *New York Times*, and local newspapers. They also review local, regional and national workforce development publications. The staff is prepared to respond to shifts in funding as well as changes in technology and the needs of customers.

Innovation. One means of improving services for all is to continually innovate. Many of the area's innovations have resulted from learning about best practices

in other local areas, such as the revamped OJT process. Others have benefitted from improvements in technology, such as the digital board briefing book that is emailed to the board, partners and staff before each meeting. The ability to work as a team to tackle problems and develop solutions has resulted in many improvements, such as the new forms for release of personal data required by increasingly strict rules and regulations.

Employers, jobseekers and partners are also a source of ideas. The career center partners worked very effectively together to meet the unprecedented demand for services during the economic downturn. Jobseekers that have needs that are not being met can help the staff identify changes that are needed in the policies or operation of the program, such as extending the time limit for training when a medical emergency occurs. The board's perspective and the questions board members ask can guide the staff in pursuing innovative ideas and procedures. These invaluable contributions by the task forces have resulted in better career center services.

Data Analysis. The local area partners utilize demographic and economic data from local, state and federal sources and also data available on Jobs4TN.gov to develop strategy. Jobs4TN.gov includes extensive Labor Market Information (LMI) that can be used to identify occupations in demand, local area characteristics, and predict future trends. CWD also uses an economic modeling program, Strategic Advantage, from EMSI International to obtain economic data. EMSI combines data from over 70 sources, including LMI. CWD staff use it for day-to-day operations, for business recruiting and for developing recommendations for strategies.

In addition to the measurements and analysis provided by LMI and EMSI data, two customer surveys are distributed to those using the resource room and those completing training. The Youth Council also has an additional process for tracking performance of the youth service providers, including a yearly presentation by the providers.

B. Strategy Implementation

Preparing Workers for Jobs. The most significant challenge for the board is to provide trained workers to meet the governor's goal of making Tennessee the number one state in the Southeast for jobs. The American Job Center/Tennessee Career Center partners worked together to develop a strategy to implement functional alignment and service integration. The partners first met in the spring of 2013 and then resumed their planning on February 4, 2014, after the final policies were issued by the state workforce board.

As indicated in the organizational profile and other sections of this plan, the partners identified ways to align and integrate the comprehensive and affiliate centers, with their different staffing levels. The implementation of the improvement that the partners identified will be tracked in the meetings of the partners and the regional TDLWD manager's staff meetings, which include WIA staff.

The local area staffs have always worked effectively together to help identify appropriate training for occupations in demand for WIA and TAA participants. They have also worked together to meet the needs of employers, such as England Furniture, with OJT's, job orders, screenings and assessments.

The staff identifies occupations in demand to fund for training in several different ways:

- Past and future demand using LMI data at Jobs4TN.gov and using EMSI occupational data. Although the EMSI includes the state LMI data, it also has quarterly projections and includes additional data sources.
- Current demand using job openings at Jobs4TN.gov, newspaper or other online advertisements not included in Jobs4TN.gov, statements from employers or projected job openings from new businesses and industries in the local area
- Economic studies on emerging occupations, or other data that indicates that both the job openings will be available and that the training is appropriate.

On-the-job training is considered the most effective use of local funds, as it insures that the training is specifically job-related and that the participant has a job now and in the future.

III. Customer Focus

A. Customer and Market Knowledge

The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board and the staff review data on industries each year and identify any changes that might impact the target industry list. Data that provides a rationale for identifying target industries is provided by reports generated by EMSI's Strategic Advantage, an economic development modeling program. The data is a compilation of government data, such as statistics from the Census Bureau, and calibrated estimates of growth.

Target Industries and Sectors. The selection of target industries for the Smoky Mountains Workforce Area included the following steps.

1. Examined current data on demographics (census), existing industry mix, employment by industry, industry wages, projections of occupational growth and trends in technology.
2. Identified tentative target industries and occupations based on the industries with the greatest potential for growth in employment and wages.
3. Reviewed the governor's and ECD's identified target sectors for workforce collaborations: aerospace and defense; automotive; chemicals, plastics, and rubber; transportation, distribution and logistics; energy and technology; food and agribusiness; healthcare and medical devices; business services, headquarters and research and development; manufacturing; and entertainment and media.
4. Identified workforce development gaps, including training.
5. Recommended development of needed workforce development and occupational training.
6. Made a commitment to continue reviewing data annually with board and partners and to revising the list of target industries as needed.

With the continuing changes in the economy, the board again reviewed the target industries in preparation for the 2014 plan modifications to determine if any changes need to be made to the target industry list. Some, such as tourism, were aligned with the entertainment sector with the addition of food and accommodations. To reflect the makeup of the local economy, retail trade and construction were also considered.

The board adopted a group of target industries at its January 2014 board meeting that incorporate the governor's target industries as well as several other industries that are important to the local area:

- 1) Automotive
- 2) Advanced Manufacturing
- 3) Chemicals and Plastics
- 4) Transportation, Logistics and Distribution Services
- 5) Business Services
- 6) Healthcare
- 7) Entertainment, Food and Accommodations
- 8) Energy Technologies
- 9) Retail Trade
- 10) Construction

Alignment with Governor Haslam's Jobs4TN Plan Sector Strategy. According to Table 5 in TDLWD's February 2014 plan modifications of the *Integrated State Plan*, LWIA 2 is one of three areas in the state that is expected to have the most rapid growth rates in

goods-producing industries, positive growth in construction with continuing low interest rates, and a stable manufacturing sector.

Table 6 in the Integrated State Plan lists the governor's target industry sectors. When compared with the local area's economy, the sectors that align best with the governor's Jobs4TN Sector Strategy include Automotive, especially Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing; Chemicals, Plastics and Rubber, especially Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing; Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, especially Schedule Freight Air Transportation and Warehousing and Storage; Food and Agribusiness, especially Food Manufacturing; Manufacturing. These industries will be supported by training participants in jobs in these sectors.

Other sectors that have significant growth potential in the local area in the next eight years and are considered target industries include Retail Trade (+3,549; Finance and Insurance (+1,566); Real Estate Rental and Leasing (+1,625); Healthcare and Social Assistance (+3,552); Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (+1,465); Accommodation and Food Services (+3,291); and Other Services Except Public Administration (+1,225). Manufacturing, which is projected to have a decline of 1,264 jobs, is the largest employer with 26,060. Although technology will likely affect manufacturing employment, it is still an important sector now and in the future. Some areas with growth potential, such as Real Estate Rental and Leasing, were not selected as target industries due to low pay.

Attracting and Expanding Industries. The partners are eager to provide assistance to the TN Department of Economic and Community Development and to local economic agencies, including area

chambers of commerce and partnerships. The partners typically provide information about their services, such as Jobs4TN.gov, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training and also provide economic data and labor market information. The WIA staff can quickly generate a report on occupations, skills, unemployed workers with needed skills, local wages and other data of interest to prospects. The local area works with the ECD staff in both East Tennessee and the First Tennessee Development Districts. In past years, the partners have assisted in recruiting businesses such as Colgate.

Regional economic development partnerships are also very important in the area. In addition to working closely with local chambers of commerce, chamber partnerships, local government economic development staff and a regional economic entity, the WIA staff works with the East Tennessee Regional Agribusiness Marketing Authority (ETRAMA). ETRAMA focuses on regional issues, such as universal broadband access in the rural areas. The staff provides economic data to area chambers of commerce as needed for industry recruitment and other initiatives

Services to Targeted Populations. The board and staff are continuously seeking new ways of improving services and insuring quality to mainstream youth, adults and dislocated workers as well as those with special needs. With the rapid downs and ups in funding, such as the recent sequestration which was followed by the shutdown of the federal government and delay in appropriations, it is critical to be prepared for change so that commitments to all customers can be fulfilled.

The partners work closely to serve clients with identified disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are referred to Vocational

Rehabilitation, which is a career center partner. All of the centers have adaptive equipment to serve individuals with disabilities.

The career centers continue to serve special populations, including individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, seniors and veterans. Employer open houses throughout the year focus on these groups. Although no longer funded, the Disability Program Navigator established a mindset of actively assisting individuals with disabilities to receive services. Both comprehensive career centers and the two affiliate career centers have adaptive equipment.

As veterans return in larger numbers, the local area will continue to work closely with TLDWD to serve them, their spouses and their children. The successful Paychecks for Patriots job fair will continue in the local area and statewide. Workshops, specialized materials, and other resources are provided to veterans and their families. Employers are encouraged to hire veterans and are invited to open houses.

B. Customer Relationships and Satisfaction

Social Media Outreach. Two new tools are Facebook and Twitter. The Communication and Marketing staff person working with WIA makes daily updates to the Facebook pages. One page is for the career centers and another is for the board. Job openings are posted on the career center web page.

Customer Service & Employer Satisfaction. The workforce board and the career center partners have three key customers. The first is the jobseeker that needs assistance in obtaining or retaining a job. The second is youth that need assistance in preparing to enter the workforce or higher education. The third is employers in the area. The key stakeholders are the elected officials and

economic development staff that need to attract and retain businesses that can remain economically viable.

Employers that are using American Jobs Center/career center services want to hire qualified employees and train their current employees at the least possible cost. They want jobseekers to be screened, job orders to be filled, and both new and current employees to work efficiently, to be productive, and to stay. Jobseekers want to find jobs that provide them with income and, ideally, a chance to advance. If they lack qualifications for a job leading to self-sufficiency, they also want and need training that matches their skills and abilities and that will get them a job. Youth want to be equipped to finish high school, succeed in post-secondary education if they decide to continue their education, and be ready to go to work.

Two customer surveys are available for visitors to the career center and enrolled participants. In addition, the customer survey administered by the University of Memphis provides detailed information on customer satisfaction and identifies areas of improvement for the partners. Comments included in the statewide customer survey are especially helpful in identifying areas for improvement and also areas where the staff is doing an excellent job.

The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board and the career center partners continually encourage feedback. In July 2013, the TDLWD Commissioner and his key staff held a listening session with local employers. One of the programs that employers strongly support is on-the-job training. When funds are available, the Incumbent Worker Grant program is also very popular. On-the-job training has many advantages including retention of

employees. Companies must agree to retain the employee and show evidence of retention before they are reimbursed. The Incumbent Worker program is increasingly popular with employers, as it provides flexibility for offering training to many different types of employees, and large groups of employees.

IV. Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

A. Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement of Organizational Performance

The SMAWB utilizes demographic and economic data from local, state and federal sources and also data collected by the state data system and reported in DolceVita to measure performance. Data management will be significantly improved with the reports available in the enhanced jobs4th.gov. It will allow weekly and monthly reports on caseloads, time in the program, services being provided, and many other useful measurements.

DolceVita is also used extensively to identify effective services and ways of improving performance. In addition to the measurements and analysis provided by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, two customer surveys are distributed to those using the resource room and those completing training. An additional survey of noncredit and incumbent worker training is being developed for administration at the end of classroom training. The Youth Council and staff examine provider performance and may award additional funds based on meeting performance goals.

The youth staff keep performance data in separate databases. The data includes numbers of participants for each youth service provider, the proportion of the youth that each provider has enrolled, and performance on the three performance goals. Data on the adult and dislocated worker programs indicate the type, cost and duration of training, total cost of training at the approved training provider, unmet

need, assigned career specialist and other data to track progress and costs.

The board's Performance and Oversight Committee reviews the performance data in its quarterly meetings, and performance data is summarized in the board briefing book. The board receives regular updates on demographic and economic data from the staff and experts. Data resources such as EMSI and the Jobs4TN.gov site's Labor Market Information and reports are constantly used to help guide and direct the board's policies and the staff's provision of services.

B. Management of Information, Information Technology, and Knowledge

Information is gathered daily from a variety of sources, including Jobs4TN.gov; EMSI's Strategic Advantage, an economic modeling program with GIS mapping application; local contacts, area newspapers, Internet sites, webinars, and other printed materials. Technology services are provided by Walters State's Information Technology Department, one CWD support staff person, and TDLWD. Information is maintained electronically and in hard copy files. The goal is to convert all necessary hard copy files to electronic records.

Discoverer reports generated in eCMATS have been used to track participants. Unfortunately, Discoverer is a difficult program to learn and to use. The enhanced Jobs4TN.gov will provide a much easier and more reliable way to track participants, check case notes, and to determine the type and duration of services. While only a handful of staff could master Discoverer, all of the managers and coordinators will be able to access data and reports from jobs4th.gov.

Information is shared with customers and partners in reports and board briefings. Specialized reports are provided on request to individual businesses, chambers and economic development groups to improve, retain and recruit businesses.

V. Workforce Focus

A. Workforce Engagement

Engaging the Workforce. Frequent communication, monthly meetings, attendance at workforce board meetings, training and a team approach help engage the workforce. As indicated, the local area just completed case management training with four other local areas. The training involved all frontline staff from both TDLWD and WIA. Low cost regional training has consistently been one of the more unique and innovative approaches to engaging the workforce. Originally begun by areas 2, 3 and 4, it now also includes areas 1 and 5.

Frequent email updates are also a tool used to keep frontline and administrative staff engaged. The dean provides these updates biweekly or more often, if there is important news. These updates also may go to the board, county mayors and partners if there is information that is useful to share with them.

Cross-Training & Development. The staff in the five local areas in East Tennessee excel in developing and offering low-cost regional training for partner staff. However, there is always interest in more training, ideally developed at the state level to insure consistency across the local areas. The management committee plans to provide more cross-training in the career centers and to hold more joint staff meetings to improve communication.

A regional team meets four times a year to discuss common challenges and best practices, and to identify the training needs of staff, especially front-line staff. As already discussed, the areas worked together to provide low cost regional training in case management for both WIA

and TDLWD staff in February and March 2014. In addition to the regional training, staff members are involved in regularly scheduled meetings with their own staff and partner staff. The partners enjoy the opportunity to share and to understand changes in different programs. For instance, changes in the Career Coach program were discussed at the January 2014 program. The WIA staff requested a schedule for the coach, which is now being sent on a weekly basis.

The next major training effort will be for the enhanced Jobs4TN.gov. TDLWD staff in the local area are responsible for training the TDLWD and WIA staff, as well as Voc Rehab. While there will be other training goals developed during the year by the Career Center Management Committee and the five local areas, the Jobs4TN.gov training is the first priority.

CWD holds an annual staff meeting with all staff, in addition to monthly staff meetings. Common questions and problems are discussed, and there is an opportunity to network. The yearly staff meeting includes all staff, while the monthly meetings focus on providing continuously improving services in the career centers. The management group also has staff meetings as needed to keep up-to-date on college policies and procedures. These are normally held after the president's Executive Council meeting.

B. Workforce Environment

CWD and the board are committed to teamwork. The CWD staff holds monthly staff meetings to discuss issues and develop solutions. Day to day questions are handled by emails to the management team, which exchanges ideas and develops a response with input from the staff member. The staff

is encouraged to ask questions at any time. Guidelines are developed as a result of these questions, which helps other staff in similar situations.

Communications. Communications are used in numerous formats. They include frequent emails between the staff, partners, board, and others in the local area, regular updates provided by the CWD staff on activities in the local area, annual reports, press releases and public notices, quarterly board briefing books, the website, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The Communications and Marketing Staff at Walters State provides media coverage for partner activities that include WIA. The staff coordinates closely with TDLWD public information staff whenever appropriate.

There are frequent communications between the local area and the state staff. They have developed a strong working relationship with two-way communications via email and telephone.

In addition, each quarter the board and consortium receive a board briefing book which reports the past actions of the board in minutes, performance results compared with goals, workload, finances, on-the-job training, and dislocations. In addition, email is used regularly to communicate, and the draft agenda and minutes are also sent by surface mail three weeks prior to the board meetings. A draft board briefing book is emailed to the board members, partners, county mayors, WIA Career Specialists, and regional Workforce Services managers in advance of the board meeting. Results of monitoring are also shared.

Employee Satisfaction and Improvement. Walters State conducts regular surveys of employees to determine their level of satisfaction. In 2010, Walters State's

employees were part of a nationwide survey by the highly respected *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The survey included questions about 15 aspects of work including job satisfaction, professional development, compensation, facilities, communication and policies. The results showed that the employees of Walters State were very satisfied, and the college was recognized as one of three community colleges that are "Great Colleges to Work For."

When staff are evaluated each year, they are asked to develop goals and a plan for improving their skills.

The staff has regular celebrations of events such as achievements and holidays. The annual meeting is designed to be more relaxed than the regular monthly meetings. New staff members tour the facilities and are introduced to other college and WIA staff.

All WIA Career Specialists complete Global Career Development Facilitator training and are certified. The staff is encouraged to further their formal education, and may obtain associates, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees while employed. The college provides tuition reimbursement for one course a semester for each employee and half tuition for dependents and spouses.

CWD tries to assure that staff has adequate facilities and equipment. If funding is available, computers are upgraded every three to four years. Software is upgraded as new versions become available.

VI. Operations Focus

A. Work System Design

The career center management team and staff have worked together to design an integrated work system with a fluid customer flow that includes a welcome function, skills/career development function and a business services function.

Welcome Function. The welcome function will vary somewhat between the comprehensive and affiliate centers, based on the staffing of each center. A team will work together at the comprehensive center at Talbott to direct visitors to needed services provided by one or more agencies, providing a type of triage. First-time visitors will be greeted by one of the team and asked to complete a short survey, asking about their needs. If the individual indicates that he or she has a disability on the initial short survey form, or has an observable disability, the Voc Rehab staff person will work with the welcome team. In the comprehensive career center in Sevierville, which only has one WIA staff person, the welcome person will alternate between TDLWD and WIA, with TDLWD staff usually working as the greeter. In the affiliate centers, the WIA staff will perform all functions as there is only one staff person. Activities will include not only greeting the individual as soon as possible, but offering an orientation in addition to directing them to services. Greeters can also offer workshop calendars at Talbott.

The local area and region as a whole has always operated on two philosophies: there is “no wrong door” to entering the career centers to receive services and it is “all hands on deck” whenever one agency’s staff need assistance from other staff. Hiring events, for example, are joint efforts with all staff assisting as needed. A recent example is the

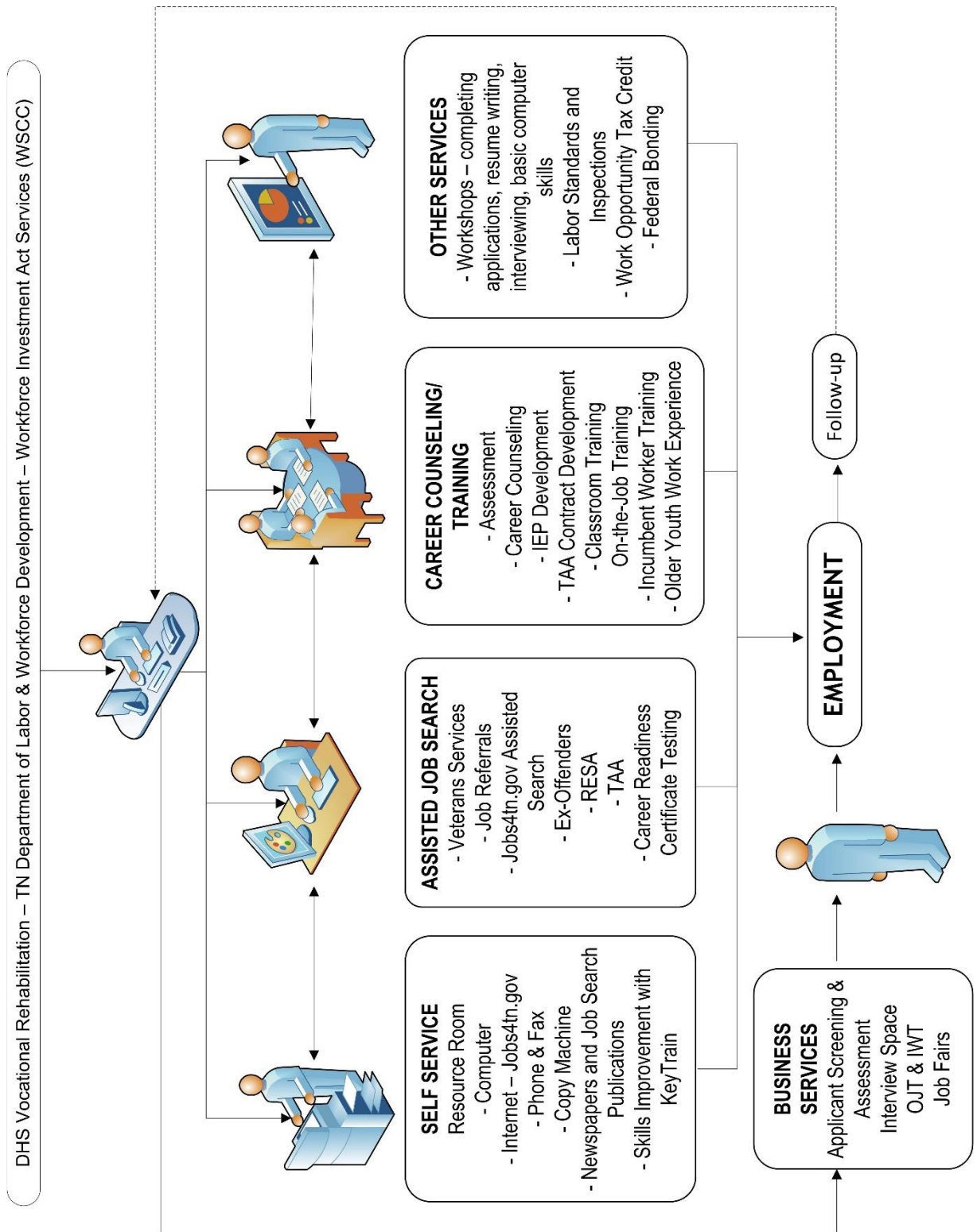
hiring event for Fit Footwear Industries. When where are major events, including “Paychecks for Patriots” or local workforce board meetings at the career centers, it is a joint effort.

All of the agency staff will have access to the new parts of the www.Jobs4TN.gov website where jobseekers and employers can be registered. Registration may be done as a part of the welcome function by any staff.

Customer Flow. A diagram of the customer flow in the career centers is included as Figure 2. The figure illustrates the welcome, skills/career development and business services functions. The staff working with a customer responds to the needs of the customer. The career center staff operates as a team, integrating services to provide the best outcome for jobseekers and employers. As discussed, an individual completing the short survey that he or she is given during the welcome function may reveal a disability. In these cases, if Voc Rehab staff are available, Voc Rehab will be asked to join in welcoming the customer. If Voc Rehab staff is not available or not present in the center, the customer will be asked if they are interested in Voc Rehab services. Depending on the interests of the customer, he or she may be referred to Voc Rehab, directed to the resource room, or provided any other available services. Each career center is equipped with equipment to assist individuals with disabilities, and has access to translation services.

Co-enrollment. Referrals may result in co-enrollment in more than one program when clients can qualify for different programs. TAA participants, for example, can be co-enrolled in WIA for support services when they are in approved training. Staff first serving the customer will complete the initial enrollment. All data will be entered into

Figure 2.
Customer Flow



Jobs4TN.gov to allow for a seamless approach to serving the customer. This will avoid duplication of effort and streamline the reporting process.

Skills/Career Development Function. A customer that visits the career center can receive any available resources for skills and career development from the partner agencies, depending on the needs of the customer. Many begin by visiting the resource rooms in the comprehensive centers or exploring Jobs4TN.gov in the comprehensive or affiliate centers. Customers also have access to Labor Market Information at Jobs4TN.gov. Once the customer identifies his or her needs, the individual will be directed by the welcome team to the appropriate service provider. If the individual has identified a job opening and is not interested in other services, they meet with a TDLWD staff person to receive a referral. Other individuals may be directed to the Vocational Rehabilitation staff or WIA. As the customer receives services, the individual may be referred to other staff for additional assistance, such as using Key Train to prepare for a Career Readiness Certificate or to determine if they need training. An individual also may be referred to other resources, such as Adult Education, that are not located in the career centers.

One group of customers that often is served by more than one agency is TAA participants. If they want and need training, the TDLWD staff refer them to WIA, which provides an assessment and advises the TDLWD staff if training is appropriate. The TDLWD staff prepares a contract, and the WIA staff assist with case management and follow and also provide support services, if the individual is eligible. This example of seamless services will continue in the career centers.

Other seamless services include workshops that are open to any individual that is eligible for career center services. Workshops address soft skills as well as basic employability skills, such as working with a computer. The calendar that the welcome team uses includes these workshops.

Business Services Function. The joint Business Services team includes two TDLWD staff who cover two Job Base Camp areas and two WIA staff that work in the local area. The team works to serve as many employers as possible by providing hiring events, screening, assessments, Career Readiness Certificate testing if the employer prefers the CRC, joint events for individuals with disabilities, veterans, older workers and other groups. All of the team members cooperate in offering services to employers. To provide service integration, the team has all of the employers that use career center services list jobs on Jobs4TN.gov.

Hiring events for employers involve a joint effort with the staffs working together to take applications, enroll and screen applicants, administer assessments and even facilitate interviews on-site at the career centers. Rapid Response is also a joint effort with WIA and TDLWD staff meeting with employers and workers that will be (or already are) laid off or have lost their jobs due to a closure.

On-the-job training and Incumbent Worker Training are utilized as incentives for employers to provide employee training. Requests for these services come to the WIA staff, which also markets the employer training, manages the contracts, and funds the training.

The Smoky Mountains Area Workforce Board, which has a private sector majority, also includes two representatives from TDLWD,

one from Adult Education, and two from the administrative entity for WIA. The workforce board members are able to hear directly from employers and from local elected officials about their workforce needs.

***Key Organizational Work Processes:
Functional Management***

Partner Consortium. The partner consortium includes WIA, TDLWD, and Voc Rehab. All of these partners are present in the comprehensive Career Center at Talbott. All of these partners work together in a management team with an elected chair and vice-chair to operate the comprehensive and affiliate centers.

Site Leads. The site leads at Talbott include Donna Stansberry (WIA), Darlene Ely (TDLWD), and Mike Satterfield (Voc Rehab) at Talbott; Victor Oakley (TDLWD) and Fran Valentine at the Career Center at Sevierville; and Debbie Johnson (Greeneville) and David Bunch (Tazewell) at the affiliate centers.

The site leads work together to keep the career centers staffed, even on inclement weather days when Walters State may be closed. For instance, two WIA staff reported to Talbott when Walters State closed early due to snow and ice on January 28, stayed closed on January 29, and opened late on January 30, 2014.

The regional WIA recently developed case management training with the Global Career Development Facilitator trainer who trained staff from many agencies across the state, including the three partner agencies. This training was made available to the TDLWD staff and was expanded to accommodate all interested staff. The training was offered in February and March, 2014. One of the goals of the career center management committee is to continue a series of training and to cross-train staff in the career centers.

Other ways that services are integrated is through common holidays and adherence to the TDLWD dress code. The career center staff in the comprehensive centers with TDLWD and Voc Rehab staff follow the TDLWD calendar of holidays. The WIA staff located in the affiliate centers on Walters State campuses and the administrative staff follow the Walters State calendar of holidays.

Each of the comprehensive career centers has a scheduling procedure for the center that avoids conflicts in scheduling rooms and programs. Each agency staff is responsible for posting the signs that are required by their agency, such as priority of services to veterans. WIA posts all of the signs required by TDLWD in the affiliate offices where there is no TDLWD staff.

The partner staff do adhere to their own agency's policies and procedures, such as determining eligibility for services. For example, a WIA participant may or may not be eligible for Voc Rehab services.

Partner State Supervisor – The site lead staff follow their agency procedures and work with their supervisors to hire, discipline and promote their staff and do other human resource activities. They may consult each other as needed, but clearly agency staff adhere to the rules of their agencies to ensure compliance with their agency's rules, policies, and state and federal laws and regulations.

Shared Outreach and Branding – The area career centers have a track record of shared outreach and branding, using a single brochure for the centers, sharing a website, using the Tennessee Career Centers/American Job Centers logo, and having a single sign on the building. For example, the WIA staff recently ordered new

pens without any WIA branding. The pens will only include the TCC/AJC logo, the main phone numbers for the comprehensive centers and the website address. The staff will continue to implement shared outreach and branding.

Communication Protocol—The career center and WIA administrative staff primarily use email for day-to-day communications. The staff, workforce board and county mayors are also provided regular updates on WIA and college activities by the dean of workforce development. One goal of the management committee is to expand the updates to include more career center information from all partners. The area is fortunate that the lead staff in Sevierville is able to utilize Jobs4TN.gov to announce local activities such as job fairs on the scrolling banner, the dashboard widget and the events calendar. Contacts with the media are handled by TDLWD staff in Nashville and a media staff person at Walters State, who coordinate with the TDLWD staff person. Twitter is a relatively new tool being used by the media staff at TDLWD and Walters State to provide up-to-date information to subscribers. The media staff person at Walters State also maintains two Facebook pages, including one for the career centers that lists available jobs and events at all of the local centers.

Common Management Information System

With the transition from eCMATS this year, Jobs4TN.gov will be used by all staff in the career centers. WIA administrative staff will also have access to needed information and reports to better manage WIA funds.

As noted, the work system is a team approach. The career centers have a Career Center Management Committee, a team which is composed of the career center partners, and the Center for Workforce

Development has a management team composed of the coordinators, directors, assistant director, and public information staff. The entire CWD staff utilizes a team approach to problem-solving as well as to providing services. Staff members are encouraged to email day-to-day operational questions to the management team, which considers the questions with the staff member and provides a timely response. Some work teams are formally designated to perform continuing tasks, such as evaluating incumbent worker grant applications. Other teams are composed of interested staff to focus on short-term issues or questions, such as updating a form.

Core competencies are measured by educational attainment and experience. Each application for employment is evaluated using a predetermined scoring system that includes the required job elements. After employment, there is a six-month probationary period, and then yearly performance evaluations are used to review achievement of competencies and to establish goals for individual staff.

The work processes include three main areas: fiscal, board staffing, and program operation. Policies and procedures are developed as needed to assure that these areas are fully integrated.

TBR requires that the college completes a detailed risk management self-assessment process that includes CWD. Risks are assessed, procedures to mitigate risks are determined, and results are monitored.

The goal of the board and staff is to provide customers with the best possible service that funding allows. Surveys, monitoring, and feedback from a variety of sources is used to improve the value of the program to customers. The college has provided

administrative and program services under earlier federal job training programs such as JTPA, as well as under WIA, which indicates its overall success and the satisfaction of the county mayors and other area leaders, as well as customers.

B. Work Process Management and Improvement

The yearly planning process and the quarterly board meetings, as well as additional task force and committee meetings, provide opportunities to assess key work processes. In some instances, guidelines are developed. In other cases, more informal steps may improve processes. An annual report is made to the board, and the President of Walters State

reviews performance with the Dean each year. Weekly reports are also made to the president and other administrators at a weekly Executive Council meeting.

Needed changes and improvements to work processes may be identified in regular monitoring activities or daily operations or may be required by changes in laws, policies and regulations. Some examples are the recent streamlining of the ITA form and processes, implementing increased safeguards for Social Security numbers, and formatting of documents to incorporate the new logo. Staff work groups are assigned to recommend changes to work processes that cut across the organization, such as streamlining the ITA form and processes.

VII. Results

A. Product and Service Outcomes

Results are measured in several ways, including performance data provided by the state. The board has consistently met or exceeded all performance goals. Employer services have been significantly increased, with OJTs, incumbent worker training and data services. WIA services, especially assessment and on-the-job training, have been a key component in attracting new industries, such as Colgate and Phoenix Plastics. Career Readiness Certificates are becoming increasingly popular.

Quarterly board briefing books include a performance report. The WIA Coordinator for Compliance reviews WIA performance with the Performance and Oversight Committee on a quarterly basis. A yearly progress report is prepared for the board for its annual meeting in April. Copies are also provided to the college.

Examining the data by program, Table 1 illustrates actual performance and percent of goals achieved for adults. In the four quarters ending on December 31, 2013, 1,389 WIA participants (including those who were enrolled for Incumbent Worker Training) were served in the area. This total includes 877 individuals that were enrolled in the programs, but does not include any workers that were funded by National Emergency Grants (NEG). Many more adults and dislocated workers visited the career centers during the same time period.

Table 1 illustrates adult performance from January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2013. A total of 336 adults were enrolled in the adult program and 176 were exited.

TABLE 1
ADULT PERFORMANCE AND PERCENT OF GOAL ACHIEVED
PROGRAM YEAR 2013, QUARTER 2

Performance Measures	Performance Goals	Second Quarter Performance		Four Quarters Performance	
		Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved	Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved
Adult Entered Employment	75.0%	82.8%	110%	87.7%	117%
Adult Employment Retention	84.0%	78.8%	94%	83.5%	100%
Adult Avg. 6-Month Earnings	\$12,805	\$16,088	126%	\$13,332	104%

Table 2 illustrates the results for dislocated workers. A total of 148 dislocated workers were enrolled from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013, and 107 exited the program. The retention rate for dislocated workers has stayed consistently high.

TABLE 2
DISLOCATED WORKERS PERFORMANCE AND PERCENT OF GOAL ACHIEVED
PROGRAM YEAR 2013, QUARTER 2

Performance Measures	Performance Goals	Current Quarter Performance		Four Quarters Performance	
		Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved	Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved
DW Entered Employment	70.0%	94.7%	135%	83.5%	119%
DW Employment Retention	87.2%	76.2%	87%	85.3%	98%
DW Avg. 6-Month Earnings	\$12,830	\$12,695	99%	\$13,332	104%

Youth performance, which is usually very high, is shown in Table 3. Corrective action is underway to address re-testing for literacy/numeracy to avoid inadvertent negative exits. There were 393 youth

enrolled from January 1 to December 31, 2013.

TABLE 3
YOUTH PERFORMANCE AND PERCENT OF GOAL ACHIEVED
PROGRAM YEAR 2013, QUARTER 2

Performance Measures	Performance Goals	Current Quarter Performance		Four Quarters Performance	
		Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved	Actual Performance	Percent of Goal Achieved
Youth (14-21) Placement Rate	71.3%	66.7%	94%	72.4%	102%
Youth (14-21) Attainment Rate	73.0%	81.4%	112%	76.4%	105%
Youth Literacy/ Numeracy Gains	47.4%	0.0%	0.0%	30.3%	64%

In addition to the performance data, customer surveys have shown a consistently high level of satisfaction with the career center services. The board survey also showed confidence in the board staff, although improvements were suggested in communications with the board and board member orientation. An email update provided every week or two was developed to keep board members and staff informed between board meetings, and the board orientation now involves individual visits to new board members instead of group orientations.

The goal of the board and staff is to meet or exceed 100 percent of the performance goals. Performance goals have been consistently achieved for all measures. Wages in the 10 counties are the second lowest of any local area in Tennessee, and therefore the performance goal for dislocated worker average 6-month earnings is consistently challenging. All Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) participants in

training are co-enrolled in WIA, which can affect performance. While short-term increases have been achieved, the economy may not sustain these wages.

When the state adopts a balanced scorecard, the board, mayors and partners may develop a scorecard/dashboard to incorporate additional goals.

B. Customer-Focused Outcomes

Customers who respond to the survey provided to every participant that exits the adult or dislocated worker program are overwhelmingly positive about the training and support that they received. They are asked to rate the quality of training, timeliness of training, and if they would recommend the training to others. One student at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology, who rated her LPN training as excellent, wrote that "I feel more than ready for my career of choice and all of the trainers were very knowledgeable." Another participant who completed the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Walters State who rated the program as Excellent, wrote that she had "excellent instructors and a well designed program."

The results of the survey of participants and employers by the University of Memphis are also very positive. The overall satisfaction of employers surveyed between July 1, 2013, and December 31, 2013, was very good, with 92% saying that they were very satisfied or satisfied with career center services and 87.9% were satisfied or very satisfied with staff efforts to meet their needs. Some 96% of the employers surveyed would recommend the career centers to other employers.

The level of satisfaction may partly result from the expansion of employer services

during the last five years. The Coordinator of Employer Services promotes OJT and Incumbent Worker Training grants, and works with interested employers to prepare and administer contracts and grants. Between January 1, 2013, and February 28, 2014, there were eight active incumbent worker training grants. A wide variety of employers used the grants to provide a range of training. Incumbent workers have been trained in over 25 skills, ranging from lean manufacturing to Kaizen training to rigging and hydraulics. Both the number of employers and number of employees being training has increased from last year.

TABLE 4
EMPLOYER GRANTS AND CONTRACTS
(1/1/13 – 2/28/14)

Program	Employers	Number to be Trained
Incumbent Worker Training Grants	8	141
On-the-Job Training Contracts	12	56
Total Employer Grants and Contracts	20	197

The companies used on-the-job training for employees in a variety of job classifications, including welder, A-Tech pump line operator, A-Tech assembly, TPMS coordinator, industrial planner, human resources coordinator, sewer, upholsterer, framer, team leader, instrument technician, chemical process technician, ketchup processing technician, millwright, and automotive parts production. The IWT grants provided training in statistical process controls, PLC, welding, industrial maintenance, STAR leadership, machine tooling, process improvement, 360 communication, electricity, troubleshooting and Six Sigma.

Exiters that were surveyed by the University of Memphis also gave the career centers very good marks. A total of 94.3% said that they felt like the staff understood their problems and needs most of the time and 90.9% felt that the services met their needs. And even larger number, 97.5%, felt that the staff treated them with dignity and respect.

The area career centers had the highest percent (79.5%) of those who were very satisfied overall with the career center services. A total of 95.1% were very satisfied or satisfied overall.

When asked if they would recommend the services to others and would use the career center again, 97.5% said “yes.”

When asked about services that would have been helpful that they didn’t receive, there were only four responses: interview skills training, resume assistance, payment for tools and longer hours. Funding decreases have affected the payment for tools and extended hours that the American Job Center/Career Center at Talbott offered. Resume assistance is available at the career centers. However, it may need to be publicized in some centers. Interview skills training is available at a regular basis at Talbott and by request at the other centers. Again, this service may need to be better publicized.

C. Workforce-Focused Outcomes

Engagement of the workforce is very important to the board and to the college. The career center staff is encouraged to work as a team, to continuously improve process and procedures and to exchange best practices. Monthly WIA staff meetings are held to address common questions and problems, learn about new policies, and update staff on the college’s activities. Partner staff are invited to join these

meetings. Monthly regional TDLWD meetings also include partner staff.

Individuals are also encouraged to continuously improve their skills. Each WIA Career Specialist completes Global Career Development Facilitator training and maintains their certification through continuing education provided by CWD. Formal education is highly valued by the college, which provides tuition reimbursement for staff. Currently four staff members (11%) are pursuing additional degrees. Eight staff members have completed bachelors or master's degrees in the past two years. Tuition reimbursement is provided for one course each semester at a state or other accredited higher education institution.

Each staff member is given the opportunity to learn additional skills through continuing education, as well as higher education. For example, a technical communications specialist recently completed advanced training in a new software application. The staff is also required to be tested each year on their understanding of equal opportunity rules and regulations.

Each staff member has a performance evaluation after six months of employment, and then has yearly performance evaluations. The staff is encouraged to provide feedback and set goals at their annual evaluations. The staff is also encouraged to submit a reverse evaluation of their supervisor. These evaluations allow staff and their supervisors to identify areas of improvement and determine steps to meet goals, as well as to highlight exceptional performance.

Several staff members have additional professional accreditations, and one is a

Fellow of a national professional association.

The staff works with other WIA staff in East Tennessee to offer regional training two to three times each year. Representatives of the staff also attend conferences of the National Association of Workforce Boards and the Southeastern Employment and Training Association each year. Staff also stay current with workforce issues through USDOL and other webinars, local and national newspapers, workforce development websites, and other workforce development publications.

As mentioned, in 2010, Walters State's employees were part of a nationwide survey by the highly respected *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The results showed that the employees of Walters State were very satisfied, and the college was recognized as one of three community colleges that are "Great Colleges to Work For."

D. Leadership & Governance Results

One of the board task forces focused on board operations. During the program year, changes have been made in the by-laws, board meeting schedule, board program, communications, marketing, orientation, and committee staffing. The board adopted a consent agenda to provide more time for presentations and discussion groups and improved the board briefing book. Task forces have also been utilized to improve the OJT process, examine and make recommendations on board operations, and develop a marketing plan. The board has discussed topics such as broadband and workforce development in small groups at its meetings, and has heard presentations on topics such as the proposed economic recovery package. The board adopted a new logo proposed by the Marketing Task Force.

CWD follows Walters State's emergency plan. Emergency evacuation and relocation drills are done on a regular basis. The staff is evacuated when the threat is within the building, such as a violent student. The staff is relocated when there is a threat from outside the buildings, such as a tornado.

A separate plan was developed for the comprehensive career center at Talbott that is leased by Walters State and an emergency manual has been prepared for the center. The affiliate career centers have emergency plans prepared by TDLWD. As a Tennessee Board of Regents institution, Walters State participates in a detailed risk assessment designed to identify issues related to work processes and facilities. The Center for Workforce Development staff completed the first detailed assessment in the college. The identified risks are being monitored by the internal auditor.

The staff constantly seeks means of improving work processes, forms and guidelines in accordance with the WIA Act and applicable federal, state, and local regulations and policies. The staff and board have identified improvements for major processes, such as OJT, using a task force approach. Forms and guidelines are analyzed by teams representing different parts of the staff to assure improvements meet the needs of the staff as a whole. Yearly monitoring by TDLWD may also identify areas for process improvement.

The board has been certified by the governor every two years, and has obtained a waiver for Walters State to serve as both an administrative entity and training provider each year. The staff and board closely monitor changes in laws and regulations to insure compliance and to update local policies as needed.

The Dean of Workforce Development reports to the president of Walters State, insuring accountability of the staff to college and TBR rules and regulations, as well as WIA. The staff participated in the re-accreditation of the college in 2008 and participates in the college's planning, budgeting, audits and monitoring processes each year. During the planning process, CWD sets five-year goals, determines specific objectives and reports yearly progress.

Ethics are important to the board, staff and college. New board members sign a conflict of interest statement, and a record is made of those recusing themselves from votes because of a potential or actual conflict. The staff provides a brief review of the conflict of interest provisions each year at a board meeting. The staff contract states that staff must comply with applicable TBR policies. The CWD staff are asked to sign a conflict of interest statement showing that they have read and understood the board's, college's and TBR's policies.

The Coordinator of WIA Compliance is responsible for assuring that the board's policies and staff guidelines are consistent with federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies. Guidelines are developed when needed to assist the staff in making decisions about allowable services and activities.

E. Financial & Marketplace Results

There several important tools that are generated by the University of Memphis for all local areas: the maps showing coverage of the counties in the local area, the yearly impact analysis, performance results in DolceVita, and the statewide customer survey. These reports and the data provided are examined and used to make any adjustments that are needed.

The Sparks Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Memphis prepares an impact study for the local areas each year. The Economic Impact of Workforce Investment Act Expenditures in LWIA 2: Program Year 2012-2013 reported that the total impact of the local area's expenditures was \$4,793,330. An estimated 55.7% of the total was salaries, wages and benefits; 110 jobs resulted and total taxes exceeded \$570,027. The majority of the impacts (89.7%) were direct expenditures by WIA.

While it is difficult to estimate, WIA expenditures will result in increased earnings for participants for many years. Carnevale, Rose and Cheah report in *The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings* that those without a high school equivalency diploma make a median of \$973,000 in their lifetime. With an associate's degree, a participant can expect to make a median lifetime wage of \$1,727,000, a 77% increase. Even truck drivers with a diploma make an average of \$200,000 more during their lifetime than those without one. This data is from the 2007-2009 American Community Survey, so current data would show even more of a lifetime increase. It is clear that an investment in training pays off in both the short term and the long term.

As the state and local area adopt a scorecard, additional data may be obtained to determine the impact of WIA on the local area and the individuals who benefit from the investments in youth, adult and dislocated worker programs.